Involvement of middlemen and hoarders in the cause of price rise

1213. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the present spurt in prices is due to the activities of middlemen and hoarders who are taking advantage of the prevailing foreign exchange scarcity and have jacked up prices;

(b) if so, what corrective measures Government have taken or propose to take in this regard;

(c) whether Government intend to enact a law forbidding middlemenship in the country; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) and (b) The price situation in the recent months is attributable to various factors, such as increase in the procurement prices of foodgrains, excess demand against shortfall in production of some items like pulses and edible oils, foreign exchange constraints for import of these items, increase in freight rates during 1991, etc. State Governments/UT Administrations have been advised to intensify action against hoarding and other malpractices, to check prices and enable easy availability of essential commodities. State Governments/U.T. Administrations are taking action under the Essential Commodities Act, etc.

(c) and (d) It is not possible to take over the entire distributive trade in the country.

Fake recruitment in the collieries under BCCL

1214. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been cases of fake recruitments in the collieries under the BCCL; and

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take against the guilty ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Loss of Neyveli Lignite Corporation by flood

1215. SHRI M. VINCENT : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what is the loss incurred by Neyveli Lignite Corporation because of the flood in November, 1991; and

(b) what steps Government have taken in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S.B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) The loss incurred by Neyveli Lignite Corporation in the area of production due to flood in November, 1991 is indicated below :—

Overburden	—17.07 LM^3
Lignite	— 7.64 LT
Power Generation	— 424 MU